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Managing and Monitoring Readiness in the Warsaw Pact Ground Forces [redacted]

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Managing and Monitoring Readiness in the Warsaw Pact Ground Forces

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A Research Paper

This paper was prepared by of the Office of Soviet Analysis. It was coordinated with the National Intelligence Council. Comments and queries are welcome and may be addressed to the Chief, Theater Forces Division,

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Managing and Monitoring Readiness in the Warsaw Pact Ground Forces [redacted] 25X

Overview

Information available as of 1 October 1982 was used in this report.

This paper examines unit readiness management systems used by Warsaw Pact ground forces. Pact units are broadly designated as either "ready" or "not ready" for immediate combat operations depending on their levels of authorized peacetime manning, training, and equipment. Pact commanders at division level and below periodically prepare detailed unit readiness reports to inform their superiors of their compliance with appropriate readiness norms. A hierarchy of readiness tests and inspections are then used to verify the accuracy and honesty of unit readinesss reporting and to evaluate actual unit readiness. [redacted] 25X

The best manned, equipped, and managed Pact units invariably are "ready" units in Eastern Europe, such as those in the Groups of Soviet Forces and the non-Soviet Warsaw Pact forces and in ready units along the Sino-Soviet border. In addition, nuclear missile units and air defense missile units, regardless of their locations, also are "ready." However, these high standards are not maintained for the majority—probably about two-thirds of Pact units—which are not authorized full manning or modern equipment complements and which are not carefully inspected. [redacted] 25X

Pact readiness management has clear advantages given Pact economic constraints, war-fighting tenets, and cultural heterogeneity. Ready units, which are costly to man and train, are concentrated in high-threat areas such as Eastern Europe and opposite China. A much larger "not-ready" force is maintained at reduced cost but is programed to be mobilized quickly around a nucleus of reduced-strength peacetime units. The Pact's offensive doctrine, which stresses speed, shock, and high initial weapon reliability, is well served by the peacetime emphasis on observable skills that can literally be timed "by the clock," by units drilled to quickly execute a prescribed set of offensive tactics, and by conservation of most Pact equipment in peacetime. The Pact's highly prescriptive but relatively few readiness norms provide firm guidance, in particular to Soviet commanders, who must deal with wide linguistic, educational, and cultural variations among trainees. These norms clearly and somewhat mechanically define minimal expectations of individuals, facilitating their incorporation into cohesive, well-drilled units. Finally, the interchangeability of Pact units, based on the common mastery of identical or similar tactical standards, gives significant operational flexibility to front commanders, who may need to reconstitute composite units from decimated units, create multinational Pact armies, or quickly alter axes of attack during battle. [redacted] 25X

Nonetheless, there are serious flaws in the Pact approach to readiness management. The obsession with readiness norms—and norm fulfillment—at the unit level is overly rigid and mechanical. Such rigidity guarantees predictability in meeting standards imposed from above but, as Soviet military writers themselves often observe, does not encourage the development of command initiative, tactical versatility, or the ability of units or tactical commanders to improvise. Falsification or overstatement of unit readiness reports may cause high-level authorities to overestimate unit readiness, especially for low-strength Pact divisions. Furthermore, the widespread use of ingenious methods of cheating subverts the value of many evaluations, and the lack of genuine surprise in both the timing and specific content of most Pact evaluations also means that high-level authorities receive perishable and contrived "snapshots" of true unit readiness. [redacted] 25X

We believe that most "ready" Pact units in Eastern Europe would be able to conduct their prescribed combat maneuvers and would be amply supplied with reliable vehicles and equipment at the outbreak of hostilities. However, because of peacetime emphasis on rigid norms to solve tactical problems, these units may not adapt well should they meet unanticipated battlefield conditions. The majority of Pact units, which are classified as "not ready" in peacetime, however, are even more poorly prepared than their peacetime readiness records might imply because of improper recordkeeping and lax evaluations. There is reliable evidence of high-level skepticism of unit readiness data in at least one Pact country. Such skepticism may be widespread. We believe that as a result of high-level neglect of readiness monitoring in most reduced-strength Pact units, such forces may not be ready for commitment to offensive operations upon mobilization and that a period of postmobilization preparation and training may be used to correct peacetime deficiencies. [redacted] 25X

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The Framework: Readiness Definitions and Classifications

Definition of Readiness

Peacetime readiness is an intangible "product" with no absolute measurement short of demonstrated battlefield success. The US military defines readiness broadly as the capability of a unit, weapon system, or piece of equipment to perform the missions or functions for which it is organized or designed.[1] More specifically, readiness is defined as a synthesis of measurable components, such as equipment and manpower strength and training proficiency, and of crucial subjective components such as esprit de corps and leadership.

In the Warsaw Pact, combat readiness has been defined in authoritative open literature as "the level of troop preparedness to carry out assigned combat missions." Readiness is "objectively" measured as a function of a number of interrelated factors. These factors are both "material-technical" (for example, the type and age of equipment, adequacy of supplies and parts, and the ratio of actual to prescribed strength) and "social-political" (for example, the political conviction of troops, manning strength, unit training, and staff skills).

Pact military authorities have embodied their definition of readiness in observable standards or "norms." These norms are designed to cover all relevant aspects of training, manning, morale, equipment, and materiel conditions pertaining to readiness. All readiness components are broken down into phenomena that can be timed, counted, or measured. Detailed standards are established and published in norm catalogues, training directives, and service manuals.

Pact commanders are responsible for maintaining combat-ready units by allocating their resources according to established utilization norms, by training troops to perform prescribed tasks within stipulated time norms, and by maintaining equipment and materiel according to standard maintenance schedules. A Pact commander is expected to report unit readiness status regularly to higher authorities by comparing his unit's use of resources against those norms that define readiness. Periodic inspections are used to verify the accuracy of unit readiness reporting.

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The objective, detailed definition of Pact readiness underlies the rigid unit readiness reporting and evaluating systems used throughout the Pact. These systems are designed to provide national command authorities with consistent forcewide unit readiness data that can:

- Be empirically verified.
- Match resources to need by region or individual unit.
- Identify mismanagement at an early stage.
- Predict the tactical competence of units subjected to uniform training practices.

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Classification Systems

Full readiness in peacetime within the Warsaw Pact theoretically requires all military units to be completely equipped, fully manned, and thoroughly trained. Pact military writers admit that this goal is not feasible, primarily because of economic reasons. Further, the peacetime posture of Western military forces does not necessitate Pact adoption of the highest standards of readiness because NATO does not maintain all of its forces at full peacetime readiness. Thus, there is no overwhelming security motive to maintain costly maximum readiness in all Pact ground units. Pact authorities expect that a warning period would precede any outbreak of conventional hostilities with the West. The anticipated warning period would be used to bring units to higher readiness.

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[1] See JCS Pub 1, June 1979, *Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms.*

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Pact countries, like those in NATO, nevertheless must maintain sufficient forces in high readiness to deter aggression, to protect perceived national interests, and to mount an initial defense of their homelands in the event of an attack. It is difficult, of course, to determine how much "readiness" is enough. The Pact answer to that question historically has shifted somewhat with changes in the international climate and with competing demands for resources.

In general, Soviet units opposite high-threat areas, or highly technical or critical units such as missile units, are kept highly manned, trained, and equipped. However, most Soviet and non-Soviet Pact units—probably at least 80 percent—are maintained at widely varying levels of reduced manpower, training, and equipment and form the nucleus of large wartime forces that could be quickly mobilized in an emergency.

All Pact countries have developed broad classification systems to designate readiness levels and to identify resource requirements for units at each level. These classification systems vary among Pact countries but are designed to provide:

- Force planners with timely data on resource allocation and utilization.
- Force operators with accurate assessments of unit capabilities for mission assignments.
- Unit commanders with specific guidance for achieving readiness requirements

Soviet Classification System.[2] In the Soviet classification system there is a fundamental distinction between Soviet "ready" or "expanded" *(razvernutaya)* units and Soviet "not ready" or "not expanded" *(ne razvernutaya)* units.[3] described general

[3] The terms *razvernutaya* and *ne razvernutaya* can be literally translated as "expanded" or "filled up" and "not expanded" or "not filled up." *razvernutaya* usually implies sufficient strength on hand to engage in operations immediately, and *ne razvernutaya* implies an inability to conduct immediate operations without extensive mobilization or expansion. Hence, these terms are most often translated as "ready" or "not ready" for combat operations

sublevels of units within these two main groupings (table 1) that reflect differences in manning or equipment assigned in peacetime or in training, mission, and geographic attributes. The system essentially provides for an orderly differentiation among units according to their authorized manpower levels.

we assess that most Soviet units, according to these definitions, are "not ready," or "not expanded." Only about 35 to 40 percent of the 212 Soviet active and mobilization divisions appear to us to have characteristics of ready divisions, which require manning levels of about 55 percent or more and complete, modern equipment sets.

ready divisions are units that are at least minimally ready for combat in peacetime with little or no mobilization

Ready units, as we understand them, have sufficient personnel, training, and equipment to meet such minimal criteria for operational commitment with little, or in most cases, no peacetime mobilization

The remaining Soviet divisions, which we estimate total about 130, have major manning and material deficiencies. They cannot meet the Soviet "ready" requirement for committing at least 70 percent of their combat equipment to battle without mobilization and postmobilization training. In fact, many "not-expanded" units do not even have contingent combat missions assigned to them in peacetime.

Soviet Ready Divisions. The Soviets maintain full- or near-full-strength ready divisions (table 1) outside the USSR in their groups of forces and reduced-strength ready divisions inside the USSR. Ready divisions are generally stationed opposite major threats—such as NATO or China. Ready divisions outside the USSR

are completely equipped and fully trained. Manning of ready divisions inside the USSR varies from about 55 to 80 percent of wartime strength. All officer slots at company level and above and all NCO and weapon position slots are filled, however. These divisions accomplish at least 75 percent of the prescribed Soviet training program and have virtually complete sets of modern equipment.

Soviet Not-Ready Divisions. Table 1 shows the two broad categories of not-ready divisions are "cadre" and "mobilization base." During peacetime, low-strength active divisions range in strength from about 5 to 40 percent, while unmanned equipment sets are maintained at mobilization bases. We have not identified any not-ready divisions that are manned any higher than 40 percent. (The strengths of ready divisions range from 55 to 100 percent.)

Although most of our evidence involves divisional classification, Soviet nondivisional units are also designated as either ready or not ready.

the Soviet classification process permits resources to be allocated in regional, divisional, and regimental "blocks" to create readiness postures that are adaptable to changing policy choices. At the regional level, for example, resources are allocated to military districts or groups of forces on the basis of their strategic importance to the Soviet Union. The Soviets have thus concentrated their resources to create well-prepared ground forces opposite NATO that are able to conduct operations with little or no mobilization.[4] Resources allocated to critical border military districts (MDs) have resulted in higher ratios of ready to cadre units—and thus higher regional readiness postures—compared with less critical internal MDs. For example, Soviet divisional forces in the Far East, which are located in proximity to the Chinese border, are estimated to be manned at an overall average of about 60 percent of their intended wartime strength. Comparable forces in the Western MDs, however, buffered from NATO by the Soviet groups of forces and non-Soviet Warsaw Pact armies, are manned at lower levels averaging 35 to 40 percent

[4] We do not, however, assess that the Soviets have all the high-echelon support elements in Eastern Europe that would be required for an offensive against NATO.

most armies, divisions, and even regiments consist of a combination of ready and cadre subelements. The ratio of ready to not-ready subelements within any formation such as an army, or within any unit such as a division, can be adjusted to produce greater or lesser force readiness as policy or resources dictate.

virtually all Soviet MDs, however, contain at least one fully manned unit at regimental level. Thus Soviet military planners have ensured that at least a small nucleus of ready, trained units are at their immediate disposal for quick reaction in all parts of the Soviet Union.

Our assessments,

indicate that the Soviet readiness classification and allocation process has historically responded to changing defense priorities. Resources have been readily shifted to alter regional ratios of ready to not-ready units as needs and policy dictated. In reallocating resources, some expanded units have been reduced to cadre strength to free resources to support a force buildup in another region. This process of robbing Peter to pay Paul apparently underwrote Soviet force increases in the Far East during the 1970s and in Czechoslovakia in 1968 when resources were siphoned from military districts in the western and southwestern USSR to support those buildups.

In the future, should the Soviets reduce resources available to the ground forces, we would expect to see selected units move to lower readiness categories rather than to see units disbanded.

Non-Soviet Readiness Classification Systems. Non-Soviet Warsaw Pact (NSWP) military planners use their own national classification schemes [5] that differ in detail, though not in principle, from the Soviet unit readiness classification system described above. NSWP systems, like their Soviet counterpart, provide

[5] We do not have evidence on all NSWP readiness systems. Discussion of NSWP readiness here and elsewhere in this study is restricted to countries for which we have reliable direct or indirect evidence.

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Table 1
Characteristics of Soviet Divisions

Russian Terminology	Translation/ Description	Manning	Equipment	Training	Probable NATO Category
Razvernutaya	**Expanded; deployed; ready**	**55 to 100 percent**	**Full equipment sets**	**Full or near full training program**	**A and B**
Diviziya pervogo [a] otryada; diviziya polnogo sostava	First-line division at full strength outside USSR; type 1, A	95 to 100 percent (full or near full manning)	All authorized equipment available; includes most modern equipment types in inventory	Full training program conducted	A
Diviziya vtorogo otryada; v postoyannom sokrashchennii	Second-line division near full strength inside USSR; in constant readiness but reduced strength inside USSR; type 2, B	55 to 80 percent	All authorized equipment available	Conducts at least 75 percent of full training program	Some A and some B
Pridvornaya [b]	Elite; level 1	About 70 to 80 percent; MRDs may have one MRR near full strength, other MRRs at reduced strength	Includes most modern equipment types in inventory; often first divisions to receive new equipment	Conducts at least 75 percent of full training program	Some A and some B
Unknown	Level 2	55 to 70 percent; MRDs may have one MRR near cadre strength, other MRRs at least at reduced strength	Equipment of recent vintage and adequate	Conducts at least 75 percent of full training program with exception of cadre MRR	Mostly B
Nerazvernutaya	**Not expanded; not deployed; not filled up; not ready**	**Up to 40 percent**	**Often equipment shortages; generally older equipment**	**Curtailed training program**	**C**
Kadrirovannaya diviziya; typa V	Cadre divisions; type C, 3	5 to 40 percent; officer fill at company level and above; FROG BN "expanded"	Often equipment shortages; generally older equipment	Curtailed training program	C
Unknown [b]	High-strength cadre	25 to 40 percent; in MRDs with this manning, one MRR will be manned at reduced strength "expanded"	Support equipment and often APC shortages; TDs in western MDs equipped with modern T-64 and T-72 medium tanks	Limited to battalion level or below except in the "expanded" MRR, which can conduct regimental training	C
Unknown	Low-strength cadre	10 to 20 percent	Tend to be MRDs; support equipment and APC shortages; older equipment predominates; few presently have modern T-64 or T-72 medium tanks	Limited to company level or below	C

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Table 1 (continued)

Russian Terminology	Translation/ Description	Manning	Equipment	Training	Probable NATO Category
Polnostyu kadrirovannaya	Completely cadre	About 5 to 10 percent; officers predominate, enlisted personnel available primarily for maintainance of equipment	Mostly MRDs; major equipment deficiencies, few wheeled support vehicles and APCs; older equipment	No unit training, some individual training	C
Diviziya vtorogo formirovanniya	2nd formation divisions	No manning, officers predesignated from colocated manned divisions	Major equipment shortages, including combat equipment; older, obsolete equipment	No peacetime training	Mobilization divisions

[a] These are among the most frequently used terms by emigres in describing these units.
[b] Emigres have further identified these divisions as *polu-kadrinovannaya* (partial cadre) and *polu-razvernutaya* (half deployed).

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broad guidelines for the allocation of resources to units at varying readiness levels. As in the Soviet forces, the best prepared and most resource-intensive units are generally kept closest to the anticipated threat. [redacted]

Hungary. [redacted] the Hungarian military maintains its units in one of four categories of unit readiness referred to as first-, second-, third-, and fourth-echelon units. First-echelon units are those west of the Danube—in areas closest to NATO—or are missile and air force units that require higher readiness because of their assigned missions and technical complexity. First-echelon units receive the most experienced and best trained officers and NCOs and are the best manned, trained, and equipped of all Hungarian units. They are [redacted] capable of "engaging in combat with their present organization and equipment"—that is, without augmentation. Second-echelon units, although not as well equipped as first-echelon units, may be manned at comparable levels but receive younger, less well trained and less experienced cadre. Third-echelon units are maintained at reduced strength and are assigned older equipment. Fourth-echelon units have very small or no cadres and possibly little equipment. Only first- and second-echelon Hungarian units appear ready or "expanded" in the Soviet sense. [redacted] 25X 25X

Poland. The Poles have a unit readiness classification system consisting of three categories: "constant-ready" units manned at 80 percent or more, "reduced-strength" units manned at between 35 and 80 percent, and "skeletonized" units manned at below 35 percent of wartime strength.[6] The unit's quality and quantity of equipment is related to its unit manning category, with some skeletal units not fully equipped or equipped with obsolete weapons such as the T-34 tank. As elsewhere in the Warsaw Pact, the most 25X 25X

[6] The Poles also have a formal four-category system that classifies units according to their availability after mobilization. While this system generally corresponds to the unit readiness classification system, it is essentially a system for operational planning rather than for resource management [redacted] 25X

ready Polish units are generally those garrisoned closest to NATO, in the western part of Poland.

The Polish classification system does not correspond with the Soviet system. The major distinction is with Polish reduced-strength units that overlap the Soviet ready and not-ready categories.

East Germany. We have little direct information on the East German unit readiness classification system. most combat units are in the ready category and are at or near full strength, have full equipment sets, and conduct active, continuous training. Some units are, however, programed to expand to a larger unit in wartime. An army artillery regiment, for example, might be programed to expand to a brigade. we estimate that East Germany has used its available resources to create a small but generally well-prepared armed force that needs limited augmentation to reach wartime strengths. This reflects East Germany's lack of depth within which to mobilize or train cadre units. Since there may be little time for mobilization given East Germany's geographic location on NATO's border, units must be prepared to fight with very little notice

Warsaw Pact Alert Stages

In addition to a unit's readiness classification, which involves resource allocation decisions, Pact units are maintained in one of four formal alert stages that determine their routine peacetime activities. These stages (shown in table 2 with appropriate activities) are roughly equivalent to US Defense Readiness Conditions.

During peacetime, Pact units are normally maintained in "constant combat readiness." the activity that a unit pursues at this stage varies substantially depending on the unit's readiness classification. For example, personnel in Pact ready units train intensively, and those in not-ready units spend most of their time maintaining equipment.

Table 2
Pact-Wide Alert Stages

Alert Stage	Characteristics
Constant combat readiness	Routine unit training
	Leave and passes granted at commander's discretion
	Equipment in stored condition
	Reservists not recalled
Increased combat readiness	Personnel on leave, pass, or temporary duty are recalled
	Initiate preparations to receive reservists and equipment
	Remove equipment from storage
	Small advance elements sent to dispersal sites
Threat of war readiness	Units initiate movement to dispersal sites
	Initiate mobilization of reservists and equipment
	Establish wartime command and control structure
Full combat readiness	Full mobilization
	Wartime command and control structure in place
	Await missions

The four alert stages, which are used throughout the Pact, define steps in an orderly, manageable transition from normal peacetime posture to full combat readiness. The less prepared a unit is in peacetime because of resource deficiencies, the more steps it must take and the more resources (manning, training, and equipment) it must acquire to reach full combat readiness. The four alert stages provide unit commanders with guidance and uniform benchmarks as they methodically prepare their units for battle.

Taken together, Pact unit readiness classification systems and the alert stage system provide broad guidance for allocating and utilizing resources. Readiness classification systems specify a unit's resource

requirement and the degree of relative readiness it will be required to maintain within the force structure as a whole. The alert stage system specifies the activities a unit should carry out routinely and during heightened periods of tension. Alert stages also guide force planners and commanders in authorizing the release of additional resources to unprepared units as hostilities approach and higher unit readiness becomes imperative.

To assure that unit resources are properly utilized and that required unit readiness is actually achieved during peacetime, all Warsaw Pact military forces engage in elaborate unit readiness reporting, monitoring, and inspection programs.

Unit Readiness Reporting

This section discusses the reporting procedures used by Pact units to inform their superiors of their manning, training, and equipment readiness status. Detailed norms define acceptable levels of readiness in each of these areas, and elaborate reports are prepared to document compliance with these norms.

Readiness reporting is complex and administratively tedious. The accuracy and honesty of reporting varies widely according to unit readiness levels and type of report.

General Pact Procedures

As in all armed forces, combat readiness is a command responsibility throughout the Pact. To assist commanders in managing their allotted resources, equipment and materiel usage is regularly reported and monitored against detailed norms. Unit and individual skills are also regularly compared with performance standards that are designed to demonstrate readiness for combat.

Pact unit readiness reports document the status of manning, equipment (availability and condition), training, and logistics. Commanders directly monitor all aspects of manpower readiness. Authority for maintaining equipment readiness is delegated by commanders to technical specialists in fields such as armor, artillery, and communications.

Manpower Readiness

Manpower readiness reports focus on unit strength and training results. Unit commanders and their chiefs of staff are personally accountable for manpower availability and mobilization planning. Commanders share training responsibility with their subordinate technical specialists.

Manpower availability must be recorded and reported daily. Company clerks are universally responsible throughout the Pact for compiling daily reports, which include data on total strength, specialist strength, authorized manpower, and personnel assigned and present for duty[7] (table 3). Strength reporting below battalion level is quite informal. Clerks maintain hard-bound manning journals with unit rosters—often running to over 100 pages—and make penciled entries each day for each individual. Strength figures are usually telephoned up the chain of command through battalion level and are officially recorded in consolidated regimental-level reports.

Commanders at all levels pay close attention to their officer and specialist strength ratios. The required ratios probably vary according to unit type. Highly technical units are composed of higher percentages of officers and advanced (first-class) specialists than are less specialized units.

Groups of Soviet Forces, Germany (GSFG) commanders requisition personnel according to military skill and class specialty prior to each troop rotation.

Manpower readiness status reports eventually reach mobilization or manpower directorates at military district and Ministry of Defense levels. Soviet practice requires divisional and independent nondivisional

[7] The Soviets also keep records on the ethnic composition of their units. There is evidence that their most ready units have preference in receiving Slavic conscripts.

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Table 3
Soviet Daily Manning Report [a]

	Officers	Sergeants	Soldiers	Total
Strength				
According to TOE	8	11	52	71
According to the rolls	8	11	52	71
Present	7	10	26	43
SGT and soldier service report for year drafted	19— I half; II half	19— I half; II half	19— I half; II half	Total
Located outside unit				
TDY			3	3
Harvest	1		10	11
School			4	4
Hospital			1	1
Sick call			1	1

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units to prepare a monthly manning report. 25X

this report contains unit 25X
strength summaries for the preceding month. It also reports on unit morale in the form of political training accomplishments and disciplinary incidents. This report goes to the military district headquarters and 25X
then on to the Ministry of Defense in Moscow. 25X

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Training Status

Training is an important component of unit readiness that is carefully monitored in all Pact forces. Commanders are responsible for overall troop training but rely on specialists to provide technical instruction.

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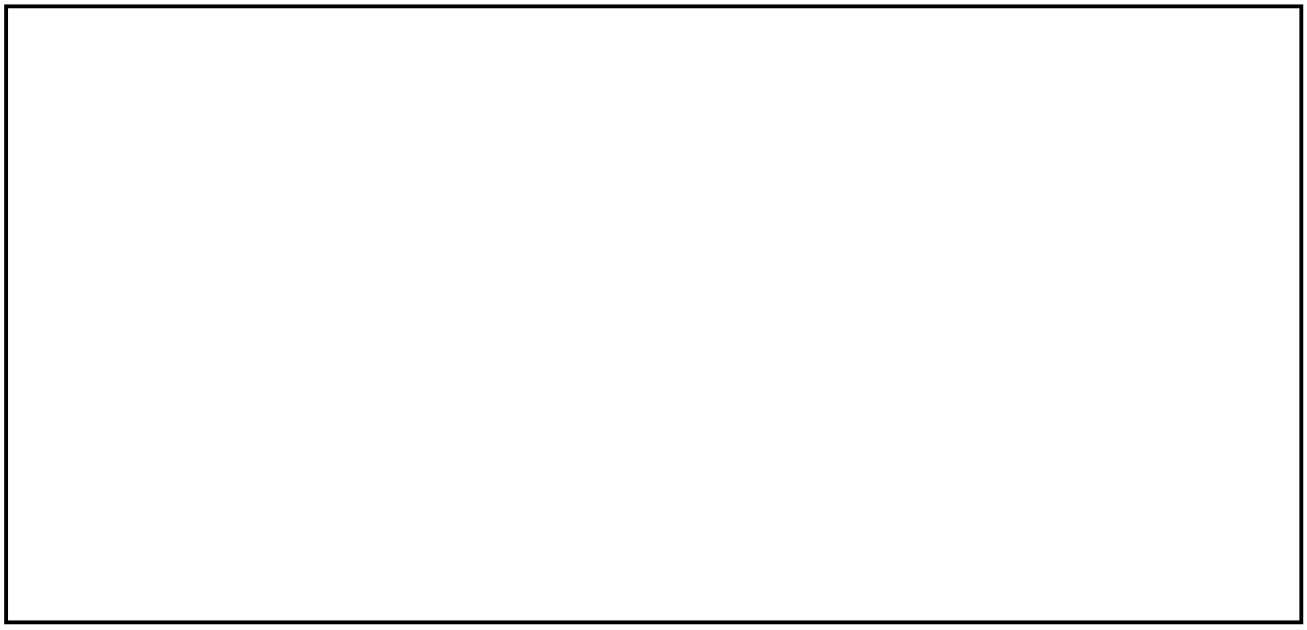

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these specialists also help commanders plan training programs, evaluate their progress, and disseminate training norms and manuals. Training status reporting is, however, a command function. Norms used to assess training readiness are extraordinarily detailed and prescriptive by Western standards.

Every unit commander trains against these uniform standards. Commanders of many cadre units, however, are unable to organize training above the company level because of unit manpower shortages. commanders are largely judged by the tactical performance of their units.

Handwritten training journals are the basis of training status documents used in the Pact. These journals are recorded by platoon leaders and maintained as classified documents at company headquarters. Elaborate rules govern the maintenance of these journals. Typical are these rules

- A platoon journal is kept for each training period, which consists of six months.
- Training is appraised individually according to training subject.
- An account of every sergeant's and soldier's worktime with combat equipment is kept.
- A score is given to all servicemen tested on a lesson and for every subject and lesson taught. All firing and driving results are recorded, and fulfillment of norms is recorded for each subject.
- Scores are computed for each soldier, squad, and platoon.

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These journals are as long as 150 to 200 pages. They are intended to chart the training achievement of Pact troops and units in minute detail for all training subjects

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"Socialist competition" is used to encourage individuals and small units to achieve high levels of training proficiency. The system is based on "pledges" from individuals and leaders of small units to achieve specified grades in certain training subjects. Pledges are made by individuals and units at the start of training periods and commit trainees to achieve certain published standards as part of their "socialist obligation." The system is similar to pledges by factory workers to fulfill or exceed monthly factory production plans. Peer pressure is maintained by the practice of periodically publishing training results for individuals and squads (daily), companies (weekly),

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and battalions and regiments (monthly). Good performance earns passes, promotions, and small monetary awards on occasion. [redacted]

Training status is reported to division commanders and to training directorates at MD and Ministry of Defense levels monthly or at the completion of important training phases, such as after the completion of platoon, company, and battalion instruction. Results are determined in graded performance tests and evaluations. Soviet divisions, for example, prepare monthly reports for MD headquarters that specify training undertaken, norms fulfilled, and performance levels achieved. Although this information is somewhat outdated by the time it reaches district and national authorities, it does provide periodic force wide data about crew and unit skills demonstrated during standard evaluations. [redacted]

Equipment Readiness

Pact units prepare reports on both the availability and condition of unit equipment. The condition of each item of equipment is documented in a registered log that must always accompany the item and be kept current by operators. These logs contain data on mileage, maintenance, and fuel consumption. Data in the logs are compared with published usage norms. These norms provide data on expected equipment life (hours or mileage) and required maintenance schedules. Throughout the Pact, equipment readiness is mathematically calculated and numerically expressed as a "coefficient of technical readiness." The coefficient is a function of an equipment item's remaining expected service life and variables that include operating climate and operating terrain features.[8] [redacted]

[redacted] the readiness status of an individual item of equipment is expressed in terms of a readiness condition category that is based on the item's usage and maintenance history and its anticipated remaining useful life (table 5). These categories range from category I—combat ready (items with little use and hence high expected readiness for combat) to category V—disposal (items with such great use that their readiness for combat is extremely low). Units are expected to maintain predetermined percentages of their equipment by type (armor, trucks, and so forth) in each of these five readiness condition categories. [redacted]

Table 5
Soviet Vehicle Condition Categories

Category	Condition
I	Combat Ready: New vehicles, with less than 3,000 km or 100 motor hours; serviceable and fit for use.
II	Probable Minor Repair: Vehicles fit for use and fully serviceable. Can include vehicles that have undergone medium or capital repair and are technically fit.
III	Intermediate Repair: Vehicles requiring medium repair (rebuild of one or several assemblies).
IV	Major Overhaul: Vehicles requiring capital repair (complete overhaul and rebuild).
V	Unfit for Combat: Disposal of vehicles that cannot be renovated and must be discarded by the unit.

[redacted]

We do not know what percentages of unit equipment must be kept in each category. However, [redacted] two-thirds to three-fourths of their equipment was kept in storage in combat-ready status. [redacted] minimal usage of such equipment. For example, tanks are brought out from storage and operated for only 200 to 500 kilometers per year, and stored artillery pieces may only fire two or three test rounds per year. [redacted] well over 90 percent of Pact combat equipment is expected to be combat ready with high reserve-life norms prior to combat. We conclude, therefore, that the vast majority of Pact combat equipment, probably in excess of 80 percent, is maintained in usage categories I or II, which require immediate readiness for use with at most very minor repairs. Likewise, [redacted] about 70 percent of Soviet wheeled vehicles are expected to have a reserve life of about 15,000 km and to be fully serviceable. Polish commanders apparently are expected to be able

[redacted]

to enter battle with 90 percent of their tracked vehicles in good repair and with at least 1,500 km of expected reserve track life.

Pact commanders at regimental, and possibly battalion, level prepare detailed monthly plans on how they will utilize their equipment. These plans account for training and administrative use while adhering to requirements to keep equipment within strict reserve-life norms. Each month, commanders must prepare utilization charts that show how well the previous month's plan was fulfilled and explain any deviations. In addition, commanders prepare monthly repair plans for equipment due for overhaul. Finally, Soviet units must prepare an annual usage report for the Auto Transport Service Directorate. The annual Soviet report, which is used for calculating unit equipment readiness, is prepared by technical officers. It provides data on usage patterns, which are used to project usage against permissible annual norms, to calculate equipment percentages within each usage category, and perhaps to arrange for scheduling the shipment of new or rebuilt equipment to units throughout the force.

The availability, as opposed to the condition, of equipment is reported and monitored continuously throughout the Pact. Table 8 shows reported readiness availability rates required for Pact ready units even not-ready units are expected to meet these minimal availability rates for their stored combat equipment.

Equipment availability reporting begins in subunits. Even the availability of equipment stored in sheds—which constitutes the bulk of Pact equipment—was certified daily by technical officers who checked and sealed storage garages each evening.

Many Pact units do not, of course, have all their authorized equipment on hand. To reflect this situation the Romanians report both a "strength factor," which equates to the percentage of authorized equipment actually on hand in a unit, and an availability rate, which indicates the number of items ready for use. We have no evidence that this accounting system is used elsewhere. However, all Pact nations doubtless have reporting mechanisms that document the effect of authorized equipment shortfalls on unit readiness. Further, civilian equipment designated for mobilization is inspected at least annually by unit officers, and presumably its status would be reflected in the annual unit equipment readiness report required of Pact units.

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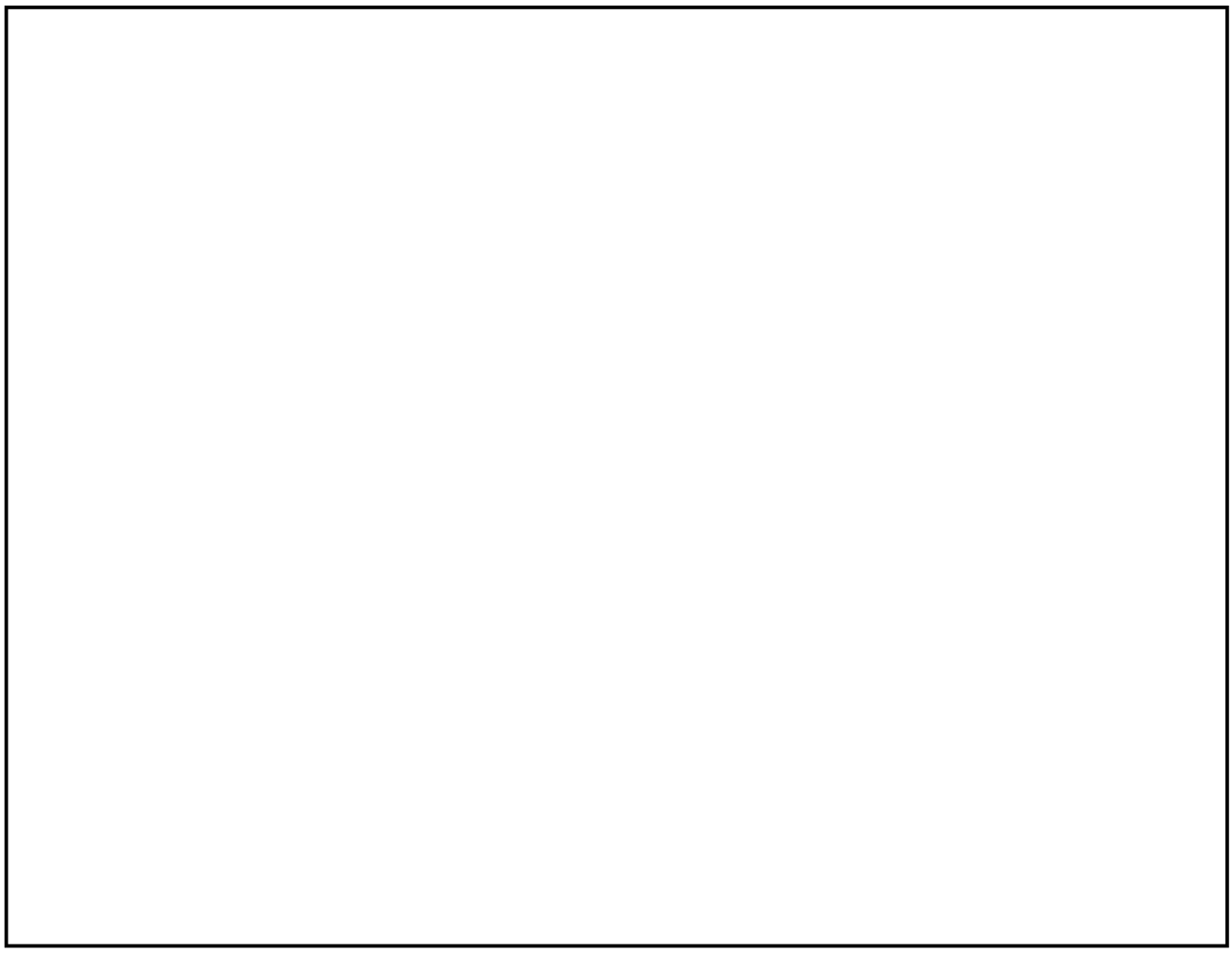

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Mobilization Readiness

During peacetime the typical Pact commander lacks most of the troops he is authorized to lead into battle. All Pact nations maintain active reserve programs that are designed to deliver trained reservists to commanders quickly upon mobilization.[9] Elaborate national mobilization plans specify the mobilization norms that units at varying readiness levels must achieve. These norms vary from about six hours to about one week. A unit's "mobilization readiness" involves its ability to integrate reserve manpower and civilian equipment into its existing structure within designated time norms.

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To meet mobilization schedules, all reduced-strength Pact units are required to draw up detailed plans indicating how they will mobilize. These plans are prepared at regimental level.

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units had mobilization rooms where specialists worked constantly on revisions to the plans. These plans were

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time-phased blueprints providing hourly instructions to the cadre responsible for conducting mobilization.

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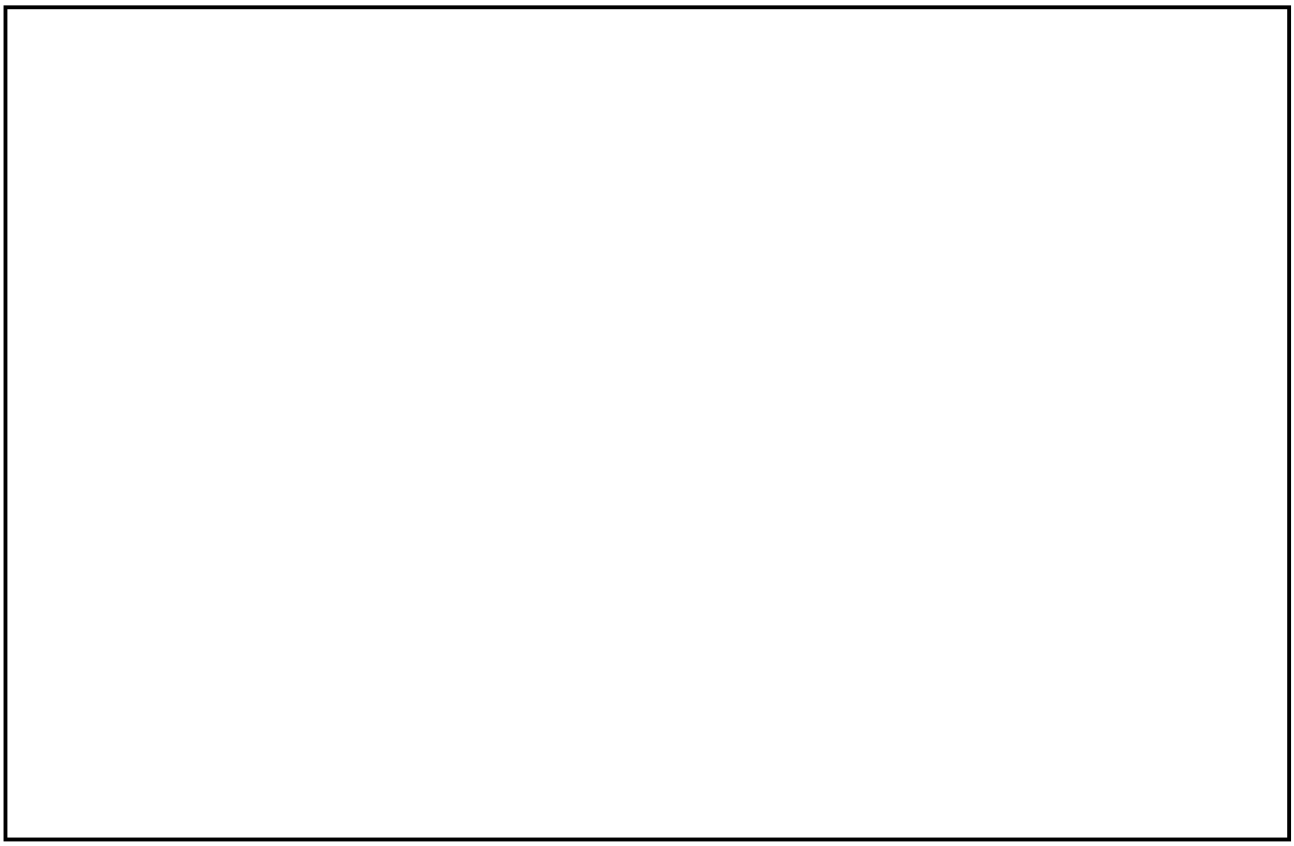

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All mobilization documents had to be personally reviewed and approved by divisional commanders or their equivalents. By regulation these plans were reviewed, and if necessary, revised at least semiannually.

Integrity of Pact Readiness Reporting

Norm fulfilment—or at least the reporting of norm fulfillment—is seen as an end in itself at the unit level. At best, this attitude encourages the formation of units that are well drilled in a demanding but limited number of skills, reliably equipped, and adequately stocked with materiel. At worst, obsession with norms subverts the purpose of unit readiness reporting, which is, after all, intended to accurately portray actual unit preparedness. unit commanders took whatever measures were necessary to report conformance with assigned readiness norms, including overstating or falsifying unit readiness reports.

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there is evidence that it is not a problem unique to the Soviets. the Polish General Staff suspected that Polish unit reports were inaccurate because they were not subject to close supervision by higher authorities

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Generally Warsaw Pact readiness reporting is most thorough and probably most accurate in ready units in Eastern Europe, in the Far East, and perhaps in the western USSR. GSFG readiness reporting journals run to hundreds of handwritten pages.

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Table 8 *Percentages*
Equipment and Manpower Available Daily [a]

	Equipment	Manpower
East Germany	80	85 [b]
Poland	80+	80
Czechoslovakia	70+	70
Bulgaria	75+	82
USSR	75-95 [b]	60+

[a] These rates apply to units considered to be expanded, ready, or in constant readiness and not to cadre units.

Despite this attention to detailed recordkeeping and reporting, Pact inspections in Central Europe reveal that readiness records are often improperly kept. Errors range from late reporting and incorrect calculations, which reflect lax supervision and individual carelessness, to inappropriate or misplaced data entries, which reflect confusion over reporting requirements. inspections are frequently preceded by frenzied backdating of unit status reports and by belated completion of unit logistic and vehicle reports.

The readiness reporting system is often abused in cadre units, particularly if formal inspections are infrequent. Training records, in particular, are altered. unit commanders certified that training which had never occurred had been successfully accomplished. In some cases commanders authorized unit personnel to work on civilian projects during required unit training periods, yet certified these personnel as fully trained. all participants in their unit's training program were shown to have fulfilled their training norms even if some personnel had received failing grades. So endemic is this problem that, in one Soviet MD, soldiers were reportedly asked at random during inspections if they received the training which their unit commanders claimed to have conducted.

Normal operational procedures have also been ignored in an attempt to meet required training time standards. commanders conducted training without requiring the use of chemical or biological protective equipment, camouflage, or the preparation of defensive positions. Such unrealistic training misrepresents a unit's true combat readiness.

Reporting on materiel availability is also of doubtful accuracy, at least in the interior of the USSR. frequent black-market activities by unit commanders and supply officers who, according to barracks rumors, are "the wealthiest men in the Soviet army." We have no estimate of how much materiel credited to unit inventory has actually been illegally sold, but one indication of the magnitude of the problem surfaced in a reported supply scandal that was uncovered in the Central Asian MD in spring 1980. Following the Afghanistan invasion in December 1979, regional mobilization exercises were held all along the Sino-Soviet border. Reservists reported to a number of units only to find that entire stocks of unit supplies were missing. subsequent investigations led to the dismissal of an unknown number of unit commanders who had sold the supplies on the black market and then falsified unit readiness reports. The problem reportedly was widespread enough to warrant a special MD investigation to determine the true levels of unit stocks in Central Asian units.

Although there is some misrepresentation about unit equipment or readiness, at least 60 to 70 percent of their unit equipment was operational. Most deficiencies were reportedly minor ones and were correctible at the unit level. Such high operational ready rates as these are apparently the consequence of the Pact's philosophy to conserve rather than to use most of its equipment during peacetime.[10]

[10] For example, see US Army Regulation 220-1, which provides required manning and equipment readiness rates for US units. Only the most ready US units have equipment operational-ready rates above 75 percent. Generally, the United States requires higher manning of units to obtain favorable readiness rates, and the USSR requires higher equipment ratings.

Unit readiness for mobilization is highly stressed, with apparently good results, throughout the Pact. units maintained up-to-date mobilization plans and card files. Plans were usually reviewed at least semi-annually. Unit mobilization officers frequently visited local *voyenkomaty*[11] to check records, and many reportedly visited civilian enterprises to physically inspect equipment that would be sent to their unit upon mobilization.

25X1 As the Central Asian supply scandal indicates, however, readiness reporting does not always accurately reflect the true status of a unit's stored wartime reserve material.

It appears that with the exception of high-strength ready units, which constitute less than a third of the Warsaw Pact ground units, falsification of readiness data may lead Pact military planners to overestimate true unit readiness. We do not know to what extent Pact authorities recognize this problem when considering unit readiness reports; there is, however, reliable evidence of skepticism by high-level officials in Poland and probably other Pact countries as well.

Within ready units, we believe that readiness reports are conscientiously, if sometimes incorrectly, maintained. However, slavish attention to meeting norms may well lead to somewhat inflated reporting. For example, 70 percent or more of unit personnel receive grades of four (very good) or better. Assuming a normal distribution, the most frequently recorded grade should be a three or satisfactory, as it is elsewhere in the Soviet Ground Forces.

In not-ready units, less attention is given to careful unit status reporting, and numerous instances of outright lying and falsification of records of the force. The accuracy of readiness reporting in such units—which varies considerably—cannot be considered to be high.

[11] *Voyenkomaty* are local boards that register, classify, and administer the allocation of active and reserve manpower and civilian equipment for active military use and mobilization

National-Level Readiness Evaluations

All Pact ground forces employ readiness evaluations that range from formal inspections, which are conducted by or at the behest of the Ministry of Defense, to informal tests, which are conducted by division or army authorities. Table 9, based on Pact regulations, provides a list—in order of importance—of the types of readiness tests given throughout the Pact. the quality and form of these evaluations vary substantially within Pact forces, and many devious and dishonest methods have been devised to pass readiness tests. The Soviets have recently implemented a Warsaw Pact inspection program that is intended to standardize evaulation techniques, but it is too early to assess the impact of this program.

Types of Inspections

Unit Audits. The least demanding unit readiness test used within the Pact is an internal unit audit. These tests, which are conducted by tactical commanders, generally at set times during a unit's training cycle, have both testing and instructional purpose. They are designed to help commanders ensure that satisfactory progress is being made in meeting training, equipment, and logistic readiness standards.

Training. Soviet training regulations specify that unit-level training evaluations be given at the completion of squad, platoon, company, battalion, and regimental training.[12] The three purposes for the tests are to:

- Ensure that appropriate tactical or firing norms for each level of training have been met.
- Certify that the unit is capable of progressing to the next training stage.
- Identify deficiencies before serious readiness problems can occur

Materiel. Frequent equipment and logistics audits are also conducted at the unit level. battalion commanders

[12] This training is conducted only in units with sufficient peacetime strength to support this level of training.

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Table 9
Types of Evaluations

Type	Evaluating Authority	Focus	Frequency
General readiness	Inspection team from Ministry of National Defense (MND) or Military District (MD)	All combat and support crew and individual skills and tactics. All administrative phases of recordkeeping and garrison life.	At least once in five years. Highly ready units may be inspected annually or biennially.
Single topic	Ministry of Defense or MD inspection teams; Army inspectors	Thorough inspection of component of readiness. May be a branch-related inspection only or test entire unit on a functional skill such as alert response.	Yearly or biennially. Alert inspections are often held quarterly in missile units, semiannually in ready divisions, and yearly in not-ready units.
End of cycle	Ad hoc inspection groups from army, division, or nearby units	All combat and combat-related skills and tactics.	Semiannually.
Internal unit	Unit officers	Usually confined to one aspect or a single topic or subject.	Weekly, monthly

25X

inspect 50 percent of randomly chosen unit equipment each month for operational readiness. Regimental commanders inspect an additional 15 percent, and company commanders or technical officers theoretically inspect all equipment in regular use for operational readiness during the month. unit held one or two "equipment" days per month that were sometimes unannounced. These days were set aside for inspection for all unit equipment, and the inspections were reportedly thorough. Many Pact units in Eastern Europe conduct weekly maintenance inspections for equipment in regular use.

Stored equipment is also checked periodically by unit officers. Hungarian units visually inspect 5 percent of stored track and wheeled equipment each month. Each quarter, 20 percent of the equipment is randomly inspected by opening hatches and sealed compartments. Semiannually, all stored vehicles are started and run for short periods of time.

unit did not routinely conduct the brief road tests for stored vehicles as stipulated by regulations.

Command Compliance.

Audits are intended to warn commanders of developing problems when correction is still possible. No lasting record is made of audit results, and many commanders, especially in the USSR, use them only when they suspect that formal inspections will be held in the near future.

When conscientiously conducted, audits can significantly improve unit readiness.

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In another instance, a Soviet SA-4 Brigade commander discovered that after the first four weeks of training, a group of new non-Slavic conscripts failed the initial training proficiency test. Rather than cover up this failure and certify the recruits as ready for more advanced training, he conducted three weeks of successful remedial training. These instances, however, do not appear to be typical. Rather, internal audits are most often used by commanders to prepare their units for acceptable performance during formal inspections. If such inspections are frequent and demanding, audits are rigorously used. If not, they are lax and are generally not used for their intended purpose, which is to ensure the maintenance of required unit readiness. [redacted]

End-of-Cycle Tests. End-of-cycle tests (*proverka*) are multisubject evaluations of combat skills during tactical maneuvers. They are regularly scheduled at the end of training cycles and can be given by MD, army, or division authorities. The Soviets have stated [redacted] that their goal is to subject all troops and units to at least one such test each year. This seems to be a universal goal throughout the Pact. Our evidence suggests that this goal is more than met. Most units receive two tests yearly; one at the end of each six-month training cycle. Results of these tests are sent to MD authorities where they are used to determine the success of training and as a general indicator of readiness conditions within armies and MDs. [redacted]

Formal Inspections. *"Single Topic."* Many formal readiness inspections are "single-topic" inspections that evaluate units according to their type (such as, missile and artillery) or focus narrowly on a single aspect of readiness such as response to alerts. Inspections are conducted by specialists who are generally thorough and demanding. Although specialty branches—engineers, artillery, and medics—are required to conduct single-topic inspections by MD or higher authorities for all subordinate units on an annual basis, actual inspections appear to be less frequent. [redacted] such inspections are conducted on the average every two years, although Pact authorities do attempt to provide yearly inspections whenever possible. [redacted]

Alert. Perhaps the most important single-topic inspection, which receives universal emphasis throughout the Pact, is the alert and mobilization inspection. This inspection involves an orderly movement from garrison of required percentages of personnel and equipment (variably reported from 80 to 100 percent) within time norms that range from about 30 to 60 minutes. Alert inspections evaluate readiness to disperse in case of a surprise nuclear attack and therefore are intended to take place following little or no advance warning. In practice, Pact units invariably receive tipoffs before alerts. [redacted] 25X
[redacted] commanders knew the exact date 25X
and time of alert inspections. [redacted] 25X
[redacted] 25X
25X

The frequency of alert inspections is apparently correlated to a unit's peacetime readiness level. Ready units are normally inspected semiannually, not-ready units at least annually, and rocket and missile units at least quarterly. [redacted] 25X
25X

We know of well over 70 alert inspections held in Pact units. Of these, only three are known to have involved genuine surprise. All three of the units involved failed their inspections. In one instance a Soviet division commander was relieved of his command on the spot by his MD commander. The importance of alert readiness in the Pact is exhibited in the GSFG where the first unit procedure taught to new arrivals is their role during an alert [redacted] 25X
25X

General Readiness. A general readiness inspection is conducted by Ministry of Defense or MD teams. This inspection is given to all Pact combat and support units. All facets of unit life, from barracks hygiene to combat skills, are evaluated. The Poles, East Germans, Romanians, and Soviets attempt to give about 20 percent of their divisions a Ministry of Defense general readiness inspection each year. The Poles, and possibly the Soviets, [redacted] also require annual MD-administered readiness inspections for 20 percent of subordinate units. [redacted] 25X
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[redacted] 25X
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Inspection scheduling is the responsibility of small staffs serving at the Ministry of Defense level. According to Ministry of Defense guidelines, a Pact commander should expect a general readiness inspection on an average once every five years. In practice, however, this schedule is not rigidly adhered to. For example, Polish units with a good general readiness inspection record can be exempted from further inspections for a set period of time. Units cannot be subject, within the same year, to more than one formal inspection, and those that fail are reinspected within one year. Units with new commanders cannot be inspected for at least one year. These factors, along with chance, inject unpredictability into inspection schedules and, [redacted] create difficult coordination problems. [redacted]

General readiness inspections involve one to two and a half weeks of testing and are the most important element in command evaluation. Theoretically, commanders should receive no more than one to two weeks of advance notice. Pact authorities attempt in this way to obtain a true picture of unit readiness. [redacted] they have limited success in actually surprising commanders. Within the Soviet Union, "old-boy" networks routinely disseminate true inspection dates. This results in frequent "rehearsal inspections," which [redacted] were more demanding than the real inspection. [redacted]

Conducting Inspections

Pact inspection principles and techniques are relatively simple and involve verification of norm fulfillment. Units train to meet the norms specified in manuals for all military specialties for both individual and collective tasks. Virtually all performance (tactics and firing) norms involve speed—literally measured against a stopwatch—and quality—measured by counting specific successes or errors such as target accuracy. A commander's skill in managing his resources is judged by comparing actual unit readiness conditions, such as equipment reserve life, against established norms for the type and readiness category of the inspected unit. [redacted]

Soviet and Polish inspection techniques illustrate general Pact practices. Inspection teams may have both permanent and temporary members. Polish inspection teams are specially assembled by Ministry of Defense directorates, and team members serve for temporary periods. Although the Soviets apparently also call specialists in to serve as temporary experts on Ministry of Defense inspection teams, they also have a cadre of retired generals, the so-called paradise group, who serve as permanent readiness inspectors. Inspection teams are always headed by an officer equal to or higher in rank than the commander of the unit being inspected. Usually, lieutenant generals (two stars), or at least major generals (one star), lead Ministry of Defense inspection teams. [redacted] 25X

Once constituted, inspection teams receive training that sometimes includes mock inspections to familiarize inspectors with inspection techniques. A team studies inspection plans that specify in detail team objectives, the units and subunits to be inspected, the topics to be evaluated, and the plan for the tactical exercise, which provides the tactical context for testing combat skills. Finally, before beginning an inspection, a team will study unit status reports and the critiques of past inspections on their target units. [redacted] unit commanders are notified one to two weeks before a formal inspection occurs. On inspection day the commander receives notice of the specific norms to be tested. The head of the inspection team, who sometimes is authorized to call up the unit's reservists, normally begins general readiness inspections with a unit alert. [redacted]

Both the Poles and Soviets organize the inspection plan by topical areas. Those dealing directly with combat and combat support skills, such as weapons firing and vehicle driving, are referred to as "Group I" or "basic combat" topics (see table 10). Topics dealing with administrative matters or garrison conditions are Group II topics. Generally, basic combat problems are further divided into topics of special emphasis, or priority topics, which may vary from inspection to inspection. However, weapons firing, small unit tactics, and political indoctrination are

Table 10
Typical Soviet and Polish Basic Combat Inspection Problems

Basic Combat	
	Tactical and tactical special (branch) training
	Field firing and fire arms training
	Driving
	Defense against weapons of mass destruction
	Technical training
	Specialty training appropriate to branch arms
	Political training
	Physical training
	Alert and mobilization readiness
	Equipment condition
	Discipline status
Administration	
	Training methodology
	Efficiency of staff, command operations
	Status of training facilities
	Personnel-administrative status
	Social living conditions and support
	Work on behalf of national economy

[redacted]

invariably designated as priority topics. All graded subunits must pass all tests given in priority topics if the unit as a whole is to pass its general readiness inspection. [redacted]

General readiness inspections can take up to 17 days to administer. Inspection teams grade one topic at a time using standard scorecards. Inspections begin with an "in-garrison" inspection segment covering recordkeeping, drill, oral exams, and equipment conditions, and culminates in a field phase designed to test skill specialties and unit tactics in battle drills. [redacted]

Performance is measured on a scale of two to five. A unit must receive an overall evaluation of three or better to pass. All subjects, tasks, and material conditions are graded on this scale. In all cases, three equates to a satisfactory passing performance as published in a norm catalog, and five is outstanding. In the case of individual skills, there is a dual-norm system: second-year soldiers and specialists must perform standard tasks more quickly or more accurately than first-year soldiers to receive passing grades. Norm requirements for each task are uniform within each Pact force. Consequently, in theory, similar grades achieved by different units or individuals on the same test signify identical proficiency. [redacted] 25X

General readiness inspections are intended by Pact authorities to measure the training, equipment, administrative, and materiel components of readiness. Findings are translated into a single, integrated readiness grade. Pact authorities recognize the difficulty of evaluating true unit readiness, which is a dynamic composite of many discrete skills. However, Pact writers apparently believe this problem has been solved by scientifically weighting the components of unit readiness to establish their relative importance. [redacted] 25X

Scoring rules have been implemented to guide inspectors in developing a single overall unit rating from the hundreds of individual and small unit grades recorded during an inspection. These rules are designed to give disproportionate weight to grades achieved by combat regiments and battalions during their basic combat tests, rather than in their administrative tests. [redacted] 25X 25X 25X

[redacted] In addition, all missile units must receive passing combat test grades if the divisions and armies to which they belong are to pass. Generally not more than 30 percent of a large unit's tested subunits can fail their inspections without the entire unit also failing. Finally, in line with Pact emphasis on indoctrination, units can receive "bonus" points during their inspection for superior political training results. [redacted] 25X 25X 25X

Critiques

After testing is concluded, the inspection team holds a unit critique and prepares a final written evaluation, which is ultimately forwarded to MD and Ministry of

Defense authorities. The critique includes an oral review of specific unit performance given by each specialist on the team. The written report provides a concise evaluation of unit readiness, lists all topics inspected, and reviews basic achievements and deficiencies. A separate written report evaluates the unit's alert and mobilization readiness. An attempt is always made to assign responsibility for shortcomings and to set deadlines for implementation of corrective measures. Reinspection—usually within a year—is mandatory in case of failure.

Integrity of Pact Readiness Inspections

Despite claims of scientific objectivity and uniformity, there are wide variations throughout the Pact in the validity of inspection results. These variations result from differences in regional readiness, differences in competence, training, and rigor of inspectors, corruption, collusion, and inflation of grades.

Ready Units. Generally, evaluation of Pact ready units in Eastern Europe, the western MDs, and specialized combat units such as nuclear missile and SAM units are conducted "by the book" with subtle deviations. They are competently, frequently, and rigorously administered. inspectors "put on overalls" and often crawl over equipment while asking detailed technical questions as they proceed. Units are put through their tactical paces in live fire tests and are generally expected to achieve grades of four. unit commanders, aware of the high-level attention given at formal inspections of their units, would conduct unit tests that were more demanding than the formal inspections. Inspection critiques are frank and detailed in listing deficiencies, and offending units are provided with specific deadlines ranging from several days to several months for corrections.

The frequency of inspections varies according to type of unit and location. 40 percent of Polish units are not in fact formally inspected by Ministry of Defense and MD teams each year as planned. The Soviets, on the other hand, seem to overfulfill inspection goals in certain regions. Soviet units in the groups of forces outside the USSR, for example, can apparently expect a formal general readiness inspection either from a Ministry of Defense or a group-level team every two to three years, whereas the bulk of Soviet units in the USSR receive such inspections only once, or at most twice, every five years.

Despite this effort, group and Soviet border-area unit readiness inspections remain flawed as do NSWP ready-unit inspections. Readiness inspections are usually preceded by elaborate rehearsals—even inspections that are intended as surprises. these preparations begin from two weeks to several months before the inspections.

Preparations consumed most of the training cycle and were so thorough that they involved temporary issue of new or rebuilt equipment to the unit, repainting of barracks, and special drills and training.

Units also are often given in advance the specific tactical exercises and norms that constitute the critical basic combat skill evaluation segment of their general readiness inspection.[13] In theory, inspectors are required to pick norms—such as the firing or driving exercise a tank company will be required to actually demonstrate—on inspection day. In practice, however, these decisions are made earlier and are leaked to the inspected units.

[13] Most armies rehearse for inspections. General rehearsals can be part of a well-conceived, effective training program designed to force units to master and perform all of their specialty skills and tactics with equal proficiency. Pact inspectors, who are not supposed to leak test details before an inspection, often do. Tipoffs, of course, subvert the purpose of rehearsing a broad number of skills and limit subsequent training benefits

Selected combat units such as nuclear missile, nondivisional chemical defense, and air defense units probably receive the most rigorous inspections within the Pact. In some cases these units are subjected to annual general readiness inspections. Even end-of-cycle tests for these units are often performed by specialists from MD headquarters rather than by peers assigned to nearby units. these units also undergo annual MD or Ministry of Defense single-topic combat alert and equipment inspections. these inspections are thorough and impartially conducted.

Because of the importance and technical complexity of their missions, missile and air defense units must also be certified as combat qualified during range tests conducted at facilities such as Emba (air defense) and Kapustin Yar (missile). Non-Soviet Warsaw Pact units are also tested at these Soviet facilities. These qualification inspections are conducted by Soviet Ministry of Defense–level service representatives. Units deploy to these ranges and conduct alerts, tactical marches, and firings under simulated battle conditions. Every phase of movement and missile preparation is timed. Both officers and men are questioned on technical subjects and are often required to demonstrate their particular skill. The final firing accuracy test is, the most important single element of the overall evaluation

Units must meet high standards in these tests, but Pact authorities do not take full advantage of this opportunity to evaluate combat readiness. For example, only one firing battalion from each missile brigade is required to qualify annually, and composite crews comprised of the most skilled specialists represent their unit.

Not-Ready Units. The integrity of inspection evaluations deteriorates markedly when measuring the readiness of reduced-strength units throughout the Pact, and particularly in the Soviet Union. Inspections by qualified, independent teams from either the Ministry of Defense or MD are infrequent, usually occurring only once in five years. When inspections are scheduled, there is no apparent attempt to determine normal readiness through surprise since thousands of reservists are normally mobilized to conduct a meaningful general inspection.

Inspection rehearsals are an accepted practice. Generally, units mobilize their reservists and conduct field exercises that can last from two to five weeks. These field exercises are very specific, or are "choreographed" rehearsals of the actual tactical phase of the readiness inspection. In one instance, unit reservists were "invited" to the unit garrison several weeks before an actual mobilization inspection. The reservists were allowed to inspect the equipment they would operate, and their uniforms and personal gear were fitted and tagged. When the unit actually mobilized and conducted an alert inspection for visiting generals—probably from Moscow—the unit received a grade of five. without these special preparations the unit would have needed several weeks to achieve the same results.

It is apparent that there are lower expectations, if not standards, for not-ready units subjected to readiness inspections. commanders were expected to achieve only a grade of three but that more ambitious leaders attempting to make their reputations would strive for a four. any commander whose unit received three fours in a row during end-of-cycle tests was automatically promoted. The average cadre unit commander could also expect that unit shortcomings such as failure to conduct tactical exercises with combined-arms support or poor equipment maintenance would be overlooked by lenient inspectors.

Another reported form of cheating, especially within the Soviet Union, is the practice of creating composite or "show" units in reduced-strength units simply for the purpose of passing an inspection. Although inspecting rules quite clearly stipulate the inspection of a large random sample of subunits and men (table 11), inspectors frequently conspire with commanders in the selection process. Collusion between inspectors and commanders is occasionally cemented by a bribe but usually rests upon treating the visiting team to fine meals and entertainment and a general coincidence of interests. Members of neither army nor MD inspection teams apparently found it in their interest to admit to Moscow that readiness goals were not being met in their regions.

The professional cadre in Pact reduced-strength units also receive divisional, army, or, on occasion, MD end-of-cycle tests apart from general readiness inspections. These tests normally are conducted by ad hoc teams drawn from nearby units. this leads to a system referred to by the soldiers as *ty mne i ya tebye* ("you scratch my back, and I'll scratch yours"). In the event this system is not needed, outright cheating is always an option one hapless commander who, tired of having his unit continually fail repeated inspections, simply bribed an inspection team so that his unit received its mandatory grade of three.

Table 11
Pact Guidelines for Percentages of Units and Equipment To Be Inspected

Unit Type	Percent
USSR	
Headquarters elements	100
Combat regiments	66
Divisional missile units	100
Rear service and specialist troops	50
East Germany	
Divisional HQ and staffs	100
Rear service and specialist company-size units	66
Basic combat units	100
Communication and chemical equipment	50-60
Engineer equipment	50
Vehicles	30
Poland	
Divisional specialist units	30
Divisional commands	75
Company-size units	50
Professionals at regimental level	50
Professional cadre commands	100

Instances of Failure

Despite tipoffs, grade inflation, and command emphasis on meeting standards, Pact units do occasionally fail readiness tests. the Soviet 11th Guards Army in the Baltic MD failed two successive inspections in the mid-1970s. These occurrences demonstrate some integrity within the formal system. The bulk of our evidence, however, indicates that such instances are rare.

On the basis of our limited sample, failure is most likely to occur either during Ministry of Defense general readiness inspections that are given by independent inspectors, or during single-topic inspections, which are far more focused, shorter, and technically easier to evaluate than general readiness inspections. Units that fail must be reinspected, usually within a year. Therefore we cannot assess any improvements attributable to the retest procedure.

Results of general inspections are sent to national command authorities. These results are reviewed and translated into broad training directives that occasionally include reference to specific units requiring improvement. These directives (see inset) indicate high-level appreciation of many of the readiness flaws

Typical Soviet Training Faults Based on Readiness Inspection Critiques

- *Training oversimplified and unrealistic.*
- *Units unable to accomplish tasks that arise "suddenly" during combat drills.*
- *Lack of staff initiative, commanders too didactic.*
- *Commanders (unit level) are not innovative.*
- *Mobilization exercises are overly stereotyped and stylized.*
- *Not all mobilization planning is timely; implementation of plans not properly monitored.*
- *Staff work and calculations are done too quickly in an effort to meet time norms; staffs consequently lack true understanding of tactical situations.*
- *Staff work involved in coordinating combined-arms operations is generally inadequate.*
- *Artillery units not meeting appropriate norms.*
- *Control equipment is inadequate; combat readiness of control groups is deficient.*
- *Self-assessments by units are not rigorous enough.* [redacted]

reported by emigres. However, since many of these directives cite the same failures year after year, we conclude that Pact authorities prefer to maintain the illusion that readiness problems result from individual command failure rather than from flaws endemic to the system. [redacted]

Warsaw Pact Inspections

During the mid-1970s, Soviet and East German military writers began advocating the creation of a Warsaw Pact inspection program. They noted variations in Pact inspection techniques and subject matter and the difficulty posed in comparing evaluations for units of different nationalities who were subordinate to the Combined Armed Forces of the Warsaw Pact. They proposed creating uniform inspection procedures throughout the Pact to correct this situation. It was anticipated that this procedural change could eventually provide the Pact commander in chief with uniform readiness data on all of his subordinate commands. [redacted]

Although our evidence is sparse, at a minimum, some Soviet, Polish, and Czech divisions have received general readiness inspections by joint Warsaw Pact inspection teams, which have sometimes been headed by the Warsaw Pact commander in chief. The inspected divisions, however, were considered "show" divisions, and the evaluations were reportedly neither thorough nor critical. [redacted] 25X
[redacted] 25X in 1980 the Soviets began insisting upon Warsaw Pact inspections that were rigorous and demanding. If the program succeeds, the Pact should achieve more uniform readiness measurements for their forces. [redacted] 25X

Assessing Pact Readiness Management Theory

This final section assesses the major strengths and flaws of Pact readiness management procedures as they relate to Pact war-fighting tenets and to practical problems of training large, ethnically diverse conscript forces. The readiness of Pact forces for both general and limited war is briefly assessed, and an overall assessment of the reliability of Pact readiness data concludes this study. [redacted] 25X

25X

Strengths and Flaws

Soviet and Pact readiness management is designed to create units capable of executing the Pact's war-fighting doctrine, which stresses speed, shock, rigid control from the top, and limited but well-executed unit tactics. Pact readiness management systems are founded upon unbending adherence to norms that stress speed, accuracy, and conformity. Such management leads to the formation of well-drilled, compatibly equipped, and tactically predictable units accustomed to firm direction from above. [redacted] 25X

Rigid management according to norm is also particularly well suited to overcoming training difficulties created by the cultural and ethnic diversity of the Soviet Union. Conscripts in the Ground Forces generally serve for only 24 months. The Soviets must train a new conscript army of almost 1.5 million men every

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other year.[14] Conscripts come to the Ground Forces with widely varying educational, linguistic, and technical competence. They must be quickly brought to uniform levels of performance—often utilizing sophisticated technologies new to the individual—and be incorporated rapidly into effective and cohesive units.

To accomplish this difficult task, the Soviet Ground Forces make limited but exacting demands on individual soldiers and subunits. These demands are stated in the form of published, rigid norms. Endless repetition of standardized drills in units throughout the Soviet army creates tactical and command homogeneity and predictable levels of preparedness in an army of vast individual and cultural variation.

Pact readiness management produces units lacking traditional Western military attributes—adaptability, initiative,[15] and ingenuity. It does, however, in theory create conditions that give operational and strategic commanders at front, theater, and national levels great flexibility in reorganizing forces in response to changing battlefield conditions. By stressing uniformity and simplicity, Pact high-level commanders achieve the tactical flexibility inherent in the interchangeability of standardized units. The Pact's Soviet commander in chief could quickly substitute one Soviet unit or even a division from differing Pact countries for another during battle with high reliance on unit capability. Such units could realistically be expected to conduct standard tactical operations without long periods of retraining.

[14] This problem is more severe in the East German and Hungarian Armies, where the conscript's term of service is less than 24 months. However, these nations are not hampered by the cultural and linguistic diversity found in the Soviet Union.

[15] Pact writings habitually deplore the lack of inventiveness and initiative of unit commanders at regimental level and below. However, Pact readiness procedures—emphasizing compliance with norms in tactical decisionmaking—provide no psychological incentive for individual initiative and the risk-taking involved. It is unlikely that the Pact will free its junior tactical commanders to innovate and improvise on the battlefield when they are so thoroughly trained to seek normative solutions to tactical problems in peacetime.

However, the price of this flexibility is the limited tactical versatility of both Pact units and tactical commanders. If prescribed maneuvers are not successful against an enemy, Pact commanders are unlikely to innovate successfully when required to by unanticipated battlefield situations. Indeed, without a norm prescribing a solution to a particular problem or a Pact tradition of command initiative, commanders could not be expected to suddenly become imaginative or daring during the heat of battle. Even more importantly, Pact units probably could not effectively execute any new tactics other than minor variations of the well-rehearsed maneuvers that they learned during their peacetime drilling. Western analysts expect the modern battlefield to be complex, dispersed, and unpredictable. Aggressive small-unit maneuvers, in particular, are likely to be decisive.

Pact readiness management thus exhibits flaws that are typical of any rigid managerial approach. Pact units may indeed be prepared and able to perform the narrowly prescribed skills mastered in training, and materiel and equipment may in fact meet the numerous technical indicators of readiness. Nevertheless, there can be no certainty until units are tested in battle that Pact peacetime norms accurately measure preparedness to deal with the unexpected. If the Pact approach to establishing and evaluating peacetime unit readiness is correct—and if present readiness norms are indeed relevant to a future war—the Pact would probably field successful units and commanders. However, if these norms are not relevant, the Pact would be ill prepared to fight a war.

Readiness for General War

We estimate that the majority of Soviet units in peacetime are unprepared to conduct immediate combat operations.[16] Nonetheless, a force of 35 Soviet

divisions strategically positioned in or opposite Eastern Europe, as well as 24 Soviet divisions on the Sino-Soviet border, are maintained in ready status. If necessary, these divisions can conduct at least defensive operations upon alert. Pact authorities would probably prefer, however, to augment reduced-strength ready units prior to committing them to battle and have elaborate plans to do so.

Not-ready units are built around professional cadres and existing equipment and materiel bases that serve as the nucleus for generating full-strength combat units. We estimate that most cadre units would require three to four weeks of training[17] after mobilization to reach levels of combat effectiveness appropriate for offensive operations against NATO.

Our estimate of the Pact's capability to mobilize forces for offensive operations suggests Pact forces are not prepared to initiate an immediate general war with NATO. Rather, Pact planners expect a period of acute tension of undetermined length to precede such a war, thereby allowing time for preparation. Pact units that are now cadre would utilize this time to increase their combat readiness, primarily through mobilization and training (table 12). If engaged in combat with little or no warning, Pact commanders apparently feel that their ready forces could mount an adequate immediate defense while cadre units mobilized. If, on the other hand, the Pact attacked NATO at a time of its choosing, it would probably begin preparing at least selected cadre units for combat well before hostilities began to ensure their availability to reinforce forward ready units early in the war.

Table 12
Estimated Number of Divisions for Selected Pact Countries

	USSR [a]	Czechoslovakia [a]	East Germany [a]	Poland
Ready	82	7	6	8
Not ready	130	6	4	7

[a] Including mobilization bases.

Readiness for Limited Combat Operations

Soviet and NSWP readiness management systems are flexible enough to support a variety of policy choices in response to regional conflicts. The Soviets—and probably all Pact countries—effectively manage unit readiness at the regimental or equivalent unit level. This permits many regional and unit readiness options. For example, many Pact cadre divisions maintain a few ready regiments, battalions, or companies, and even some regiments located in the most remote regions are maintained in a ready status.[19] This provides an ability to at least react to regional emergencies with a handful of locally available, minimally ready units.

In the event that regional disturbances require the introduction of a relatively large number of units, Pact forces are available and Pact authorities can methodically prepare selected armies or divisions for possible commitment. Historically, however, this type of operation has been a relatively lengthy process for the Pact. During the Polish crisis, for example, the Soviets mobilized at least three of their cadre divisions in the western USSR. training in these units apparently lasted 30 to 40

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days.[20] These relatively inexpensive and limited preparations put selected units in a readiness condition for intervention.

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The mixed readiness posture of Soviet forces also permits the rapid deployment of composite units drawn from existing ready units to regional hotspots.

Reliability of Readiness Data

Pact readiness procedures provide authorities with an evaluation of how well-established unit norms are being met. They are not designed to gauge initiative, innovativeness, or subtle leadership qualities in units at division level and below. There is no abiding evidence, however, that Soviet or NSWP authorities value these traits at these levels. Pact readiness data therefore probably have limited value in predicting the readiness of Pact units to meet new or unexpected conditions in battle, but have great value in predicting the preparedness of units to meet Pact peacetime readiness standards and to carry out prescribed tactical drills.

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Although the reliability of readiness data for ready units seems adequate, it is of dubious value for low-strength not-ready units—the clear majority of Pact units. Formal readiness controls are often subverted,

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by self-serving unit status reporting, which is unlikely to be challenged during infrequent, independent inspections. Furthermore, practices such as falsifying status records and bribing inspectors corrupt unit readiness data to an extent that is probably unknown, though clearly suspected, by Pact high-level authorities. The lack of quality control in reporting and verifying the actual readiness status of Pact cadre units suggests that most Pact units either cannot be readied as quickly as previously estimated or that unit combat effectiveness upon mobilization will be much less than anticipated without periods of postmobilization preparation.

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In short, the Pact concentrates both its defense resources and its best managerial talent in units opposite its most serious threats. The result has been the formation of formidable Pact units that are manned, trained, equipped, and managed so as to be immediately ready for operations in Eastern Europe and along the Sino-Soviet border. However, a far larger force—constituting the majority of Pact forces—are neither provided adequate resources nor managed at preparedness levels sufficient to conduct immediate operations and are therefore deserving of the Pact's own classification of "not ready" for war.

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